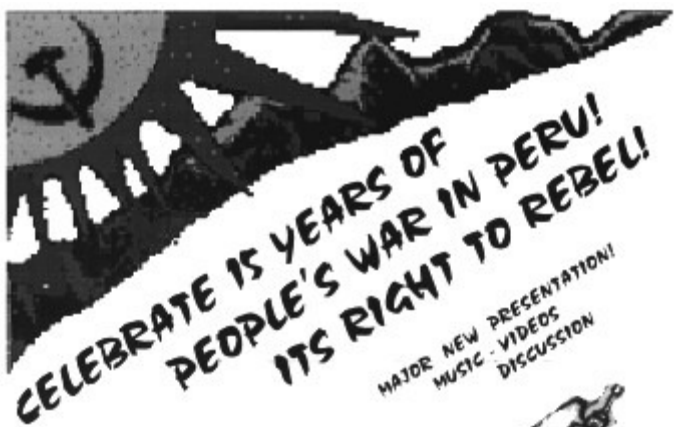


Why the People's War in Peru is Justified and Why it is the Road to Liberation



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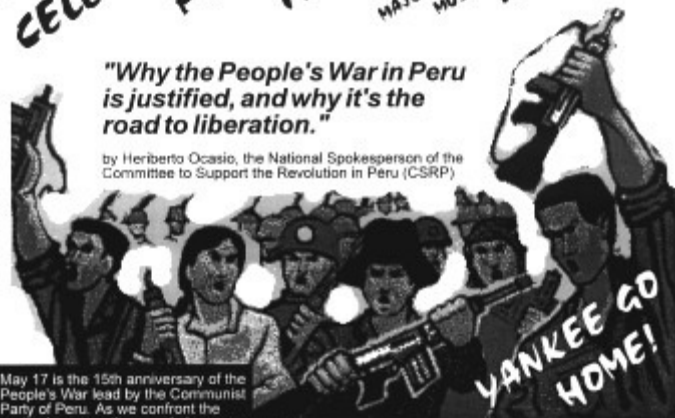


CELEBRATE 15 YEARS OF PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU! ITS RIGHT TO REBEL!

MAJOR NEW PRESENTATION!
MUSIC - VIDEOS
DISCUSSION

**"Why the People's War in Peru
is justified, and why it's the
road to liberation."**

by Heriberto Ocasio, the National Spokesperson of the
Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru (CSRPE)



May 17 is the 15th anniversary of the
People's War lead by the Communist
Party of Peru. As we confront the
system's war on the people here, we
call on all to support the world's most
significant challenge to US
imperialism, and to condemn the US
hand behind Peru's brutal
counterinsurgency. Join us to
celebrate and **step up the fight!**

Friday, May 19, 7pm

\$5 - \$10 Donation Requested, Adv. Tickets Avail.
Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru 415-252-5786

Introduction

This speech was originally presented by CSRP National Spokesperson Heriberto Ocasio at programs marking the 15th anniversary (May 1995) of the initiation of the armed struggle led by the Communist Party of Peru (PCP). These public celebrations were part of a worldwide effort to step up international support for the revolution.

The People's War in Peru, advancing through twists and turns, has delivered powerful blows to successive reactionary regimes in Peru and has posed a direct challenge to continued U.S. domination of Peru. It has been a beacon to oppressed people worldwide.

On September 12, 1992, Comrade Gonzalo (Dr. Abimael Guzmán), Chairman of the Central Committee of the PCP, was captured by the US-backed Fujimori regime. This, together with the loss of other key leaders, presented the People's War with new difficulties. Yet in his famous September 24, 1992 "speech from the cage," Chairman Gonzalo characterized his own capture as "a bend in the road," and called on the people of Peru to carry forward the People's War to final victory.

Then in 1993, President Fujimori (who has kept Chairman Gonzalo locked away in an underground cell, refusing to allow anyone outside the prisons to speak with him directly) attributed to Chairman Gonzalo a call for negotiations "to reach a peace accord to put an end to 13 years of People's War." In this context, a two-line struggle erupted in the PCP, with some forces historically associated with the PCP saying the difficulties facing the People's War were too great and calling for the whole party to "fight for a Peace Accord." The Central Committee of the PCP refuted this position, beat back the enemy's attempts to crush the revolution, and continued fighting the People's War under new and difficult conditions.

In March 1995 the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM), an international grouping of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist parties and organizations in which the PCP participates, issued a powerful worldwide call to "Rally to the Defence of Our Red Flag Flying in Peru!" This call made public the conclusions of a thorough investigation and study of the two-line struggle in the PCP and put forward the Committee of the RIM's resolute support for the Central Committee of the PCP in carrying forward the People's War and its opposition to the call for a peace accord which would have "represented a compromise of the fundamental interests of the people and an abandonment of the People's War and the revolutionary road." In this May 1995 speech, Heriberto Ocasio elucidates the liberating path of People's War being taken in Peru and summarizes the conclusions published by the Committee of the RIM in their March

1995 call, speaking to the importance of this two-line struggle for people fighting for liberation everywhere.

Why is the People's War a just struggle? What distinguishes its revolutionary path from the path of accommodation with the imperialists? What tests has it faced and what has given it the basis time and again to overcome great difficulties?

We invite you to join in this discussion, study these issues, and join with us in building support for the people of Peru in their just struggle for liberation and in opposing all forms of U.S. intervention in Peru.

September 1995

Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru

Why the People's War in Peru is Justified and Why it is the Road to Liberation

Sisters and brothers,

For 15 years the Communist Party of Peru has been leading the most important revolutionary struggle in the world today -- and the most serious challenge to U.S. imperialism -- illuminating the shining path of People's War for the whole world to see. We're here to celebrate that struggle-to deepen our understanding, to forge broader unity among all who dream of a different world, and to step up our support.

In 15 years of People's War, the Communist Party of Peru (the PCP) has aroused and led a whole generation of peasants, workers, students and others to take up arms and forge a people's army. They have struck major blows against the enforcers of the old power, and they have established a revolutionary political power, a new political power in extensive parts of the countryside.

In 15 years of People's War, they have trained a whole generation in internationalism, showing it is possible not just to strike blows at Yankee domination, but to do it as part of serving the worldwide proletarian revolution.

They have advanced and further developed the basic road to liberation and socialism in oppressed countries -- the road that was charted by Mao Tsetung: the new democratic revolution whose military strategy is protracted people's war.

Today we celebrate 15 years of their just struggle. As the recently issued statement of the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM) says: "These great accomplishments of the revolutionary people of Peru, achievements wrenched from the enemy through fierce struggle and great sacrifice and blood of the communist fighters, workers and peasants of Peru, are under attack, not only from the savage efforts of the reactionary regime aided by international imperialism, but also from a line which emerged from within the PCP itself calling for the abandonment of the People's War."

The RIM has called on all revolutionary and progressive forces in the world to close ranks in defense of the People's War in Peru against these

attacks, including to fight against this erroneous line. Part of our purpose here tonight is to answer this call and step up our support here in the U.S.

The Beginning of the People's War

On May 17, 1980 the PCP launched the People's War. They describe this beginning in their 1982 pamphlet, "Develop Guerrilla Warfare": "Actions that began with the boycott of the general elections of 1980, realized in Chuschi

and many other places; striking with agitation and armed propaganda through the seizure of radio stations, leaflets, and posters; and direct actions that sow panic among the reactionaries and arouse the enthusiasm of the people with our rallying cries of 'Armed struggle,' 'Government of workers and peasants,' and 'Down with the reactionary government.' This showed a new world to win through the hammers and sickles that light the hills, and through the unfading red flags that dominate the heights, proclaiming 'It's right to rebel!'"



Group of PCP Fighters

They started in 1980, with only a few armed detachments. Their weapons were crude: a few revolvers, a few shotguns, and what Chairman Gonzalo called "the humble dynamite" of the people -- sticks of dynamite hurled with simple slings that date back to the times of the Inca. With these, they attacked the landlords and police outposts in the countryside and captured weapons, sometimes using fake wooden rifles to fool the enemy.

In the cities, they attacked Yankee imperialism directly, striking at the Bayer chemical plant in Lima, and the U.S. embassy, and blowing up the symbolic Kennedy statue in the affluent Lima suburb of Miraflores.

From 1980-82, using guerrilla warfare, they defeated semi-feudal enforcers of the old regime in extensive parts of the central mountain region of Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac. And on this basis they organized dozens of People's Committees to replace the old political power with a new one. They seized the land of the landlords and redistributed it to poor peasants, winning them to the cause of the revolution, organizing them into People's Committees and the People's

Guerrilla Army, which has developed into what is today the People's Liberation Army. Casualties on the side of the people before 1983 numbered only 14 and none were "missing" or "disappeared." They struck at the ability of the state to operate by destroying power lines. They carried out armed propaganda and agitation, in which they raised the slogan: "Without state power, all is illusion." They widely proclaimed to the masses their goal of liberating all of Peru from the big landlords, the big capitalists, and their U.S. masters.

They popularized among the people their goal of a New Democratic Revolution which would lay the foundation for socialism and advancing to communism. And they popularized their view of doing all this in the service of the world revolution, aiming to serve as an example of what is possible for millions worldwide.

Persevering and Advancing in the Face of Government Genocide

While the imperialists at first tried to minimize their advances and declared the PCP a small band of delinquents that could be routed in a month, it soon became apparent: these rebels would not be easily defeated -- they were winning more and more support. The government responded by sending in the Army and unleashing a genocide of historic proportions. Many of the thousands killed by the government were buried in mass graves to hide the crimes of the regime.

Let me quote from another pamphlet, *Develop the People's War to Serve the World Revolution*, published by the PCP in 1986:

"They used helicopters to machine-gun the masses and throw grenades at villagers trying to flee to the mountains..., during the two months leading up to the November elections the bodies of more than 800 people were found -- people who had been brutally murdered after bestial tortures and their bodies left to rot. In November, in Sivia, in the province of La Mar, in a reprisal for an ambush against the Army, they arrested 60 people and indiscriminately killed 20 of them... Culminating in this slaughter, on election day, in Socos, in the province of Huamanga the local police detachment tortured and murdered more than 50 people who had been taking part in a wedding party. Officially, 37 people were reported dead.

"During 1984 the genocide became macabre, reaching the heights of horror...in their frustrated efforts to stop the revolutionary war by isolating the guerrillas from the masses of peasants, particularly

the poor peasants... 150 people in the San Francisco area... 30 peasants in Chiara... 40 after an operation in Rosario... 30 people in Pomabamba... In Vinchos they killed 40 commissioners of the various People's Committees. In Remillapata they shot a child of nine and another of 11 together with their mother and father who was the Security Commissioner... These vile murders -- so merciless and ferocious that children are shot because they happen to be the children of members of the new political power -- are a monstrous expression of the hate and fear with which this new political power fills them."

In total, the years 1983 and 1984 witnessed the government's shameful murder of 8700 Peruvians, overwhelmingly poor peasants, and another 4000 missing or "disappeared." Mao Tsetung said: "All reactionaries try to eliminate the revolution through mass slaughters and think that the more people they kill the more they will weaken the revolution. But, despite their wishes, facts show that the more people they kill, the stronger the revolution becomes and the closer reactionaries come to their doom. This is an irrefutable law."

What was the result of the government's genocide of 1983 and '84? Chairman Gonzalo of the Communist Party of Peru explained in his 1988 interview:

"...we came out of it strengthened, with a larger Army, more People's Committees and Base Areas, and a larger Party, exactly the opposite of what they had imagined. We have already talked, I believe, of the bloody dreams of the reaction. They are nothing but that, bloody dreams that, in the final analysis, end up being nightmares. But I insist: by persisting in our principles and fighting with the support of the masses, mainly the poor peasants, we've been able to confront this situation. It is here that the heroism of which I have spoken, the heroism of the masses, has been expressed."

This is something that the imperialists can never understand. The crimes of the oppressors only served to strengthen the resolve of the revolutionary fighters. Amidst intense struggle in the party -- over how to overcome these difficulties and go forward -- a more steeled and tempered party and a People's Army developed, and a new plan and ability to forge many more base areas in new areas of the countryside. This was the result of this heroic period of 1983-'84.

Maoist Ideology and Military Strategy

Why were they able to strengthen the revolution in the face of this genocide? The basis was the Party's ideology, their strategic confidence in the masses, and confidence in their political and military strategy. The ideology of their Party, based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, has enabled Party members and revolutionary fighters to (as they say) "carry their lives on their fingertips," ready to give their lives at a moment to advance the People's War and the world revolution.

Their confidence in their strategy is based on a clear analysis of Peruvian society linked to the historical experience of new democratic revolution in China. I'll explain more in a bit about the essential aspects of the political road of new democratic revolution.



Mao Tsetung

They are firmly convinced of their Maoist military strategy: a protracted People's War, a war which targets what they call "the three mountains that weigh on the people": imperialism, bureaucrat-capitalism, and semi-feudalism in the countryside. A protracted People's War, which targets these three mountains and establishes a new People's Power in the countryside, in the revolutionary base areas, and which represents the fundamental interests of the masses. They are convinced that by persevering in this strategy, defeating the enemy bite by bite, and surrounding the cities from their base areas in the countryside, more masses can and will be won to the revolution, enabling them to advance in the face of difficulties, and enabling them to eventually take the cities, which are the bastions of power for the old order.

The Three Mountains

Let me explain more about why their strategy is the road to liberation. First of all, the people of Peru face the three great mountains and the People's War targets all three: bureaucrat-capitalism (which I will explain in a bit), the big landlords, and imperialist domination. The People's War aims at defeating the power of all three. Nothing less.

Let's talk about the three mountains and what they mean in human terms. First imperialism.

Peru, like many such oppressed nations around the world, has been victimized by centuries of colonial and imperialist (especially Yankee)

domination. The U.S. is directly responsible for the immense suffering and misery of the Peruvian people.

One example is the U.S. company WR Grace which, like the famous United Fruit company in Guatemala, built a whole empire based on the brutal exploitation of Peru's people. WR Grace got its start by shipping guano (bird droppings which are used as fertilizer) from Peru to Great Britain in the 1800s. By the early 1900s, WR Grace had gained control of several large Peruvian mines and plantations and branched out into textile production.

WR Grace needed laborers for their sugar plantations. It stopped at nothing. Indigenous peasants were pushed off their land. Labor contractors recruited them with cash advances to be "worked off" -- a system of debt servitude that remained in effect through the 1940s. By the 1960s, Grace's holdings in Peru included four textile mills, two large sugar plantations, chemical, paper box, and paint plants, as well as fishmeal and mining enterprises. Grace controlled 75 percent of sugar refining, over 50 percent of cotton textile production, and nearly 90 percent of paper production in Peru. It was the second largest industrial employer in all of Peru by the 1960s.

U.S. exploitation of Peru after World War II centered mainly on minerals (gold, silver, copper, and zinc), and mining continues to be the main source of wealth for U.S. companies in Peru today. By 1968 three American firms controlled 75 percent of the Peruvian mining industry. Eighty percent of the production was exported. The profits for U.S. companies have been enormous. Just during the period from 1950 to 1970, U.S. mining companies invested \$284 million in Peru, but they returned a profit of \$790 million to U.S. companies from their Peruvian operations.

All these U.S. companies needed infrastructure: running water, electricity for their mining and processing plants, roads and railways to transport their minerals. All this was paid for by the Peruvian government with loans from the IMF -- the International Monetary Fund. All of this so-called "development" has been geared to the needs of U.S. companies and their needs in sucking profits out of Peru. It has not contributed in any way to the needs of Peru's people.

Running water and electricity are provided to the mining enterprises while half the population of Lima today lives in shantytowns without running water or electricity. And the loans that have been needed to provide infrastructure for U.S. companies are being repaid with the blood of the masses.

Drastic austerity measures, imposed by the IMF, have insured that Peru continues to pay between \$60 and \$90 million back to U.S. banks every single month.

These austerity measures, imposed by the Fujimori government in order to repay the debt, have resulted in a tremendous increase in the price of basic necessities for the people -- necessities like kerosene to cook and boil their water. What this means for shantytown dwellers, who have no running water or electricity, is that they can no longer afford to buy kerosene to boil their drinking water. Thousands have died, simply because they have to drink unboiled, cholera-infested water.

What about the mountain of bureaucrat-capitalism? What does that mean? Well, bureaucrat-capitalism is the main form that Peruvian capitalism takes today. In *Don't Vote, Step Up Guerrilla Warfare to Seize Political Power for the People!*, the Communist Party of Peru describes it as: "a belated capitalism linked to the landlords' interest and which, consequently, in no way seeks the destruction of semi-feudal conditions but at most its evolution. More importantly, it is a capitalism completely subjugated to imperialism -- in our case principally Yankee imperialism -- and therefore does not develop the potentially great productive forces of our country. Further more, they say, "It wastes, shackles, or destroys the productive forces and in no way develops a national economy; on the contrary, it is completely at the service of imperialism's increasing exploitation and is totally against the national interests of the majority, of the most basic and most urgent needs of the our masses."

Let me give you one example of bureaucrat-capitalism. Peru is one of the world's major fish-producing countries. Is this production feeding the people? No, there is mass starvation. Eighty thousand children die every year, 200 every day of poverty and malnutrition. Most of the fish production, however, goes into fishmeal which is sold to U.S. pet food companies for cat food. This is bureaucrat-capitalism. Peruvian companies are feeding cats in the United States instead of feeding their own people.

What has this kind of "economic development" (as they call it) meant for people in the countryside?

The development of an economy geared to the profits of foreign investors has meant that in the countryside only the large landowners can afford to pay for the cost of fertilizer, irrigation, and transporting agricultural products to market. Most peasants are without land and at the mercy of local tyrants called gamonales. While U.S. owned plantations and mining companies get electricity, water, and roads, other areas of the countryside have been left to rot, without roads, without electricity or running water.

Five hundred years ago the territory of what is now Peru fed 9 million people and produced an abundant surplus. Today the peasants in the poor zones of the southern highlands live on as little as 400 calories per day.

This is the mountain of semi-feudalism in the countryside. It was explained by Jose Carlos Mariátegui, who founded the Communist Party of Peru in 1928. He explained that the people of Peru will never be free until they decisively deal with the question of land to the tiller, that the Spanish colonialists replaced what had been mainly a communal land system -- where the peasants collectively owned the land they worked on and produced enough to feed themselves -- with a feudal system. The Spanish replaced communal ownership with ownership by large individual landowners, ripping the land away from the native people who had lived on it and worked on it for thousands of years and putting the land in the hands of big feudal landowners.

This feudal system of land ownership has been maintained for 500 years, despite numerous rebellions of the poor peasants. Imperialism has not fundamentally changed the situation -- it has only modified it by foreign investors like WR Grace becoming the new big landowners or by the Peruvian government becoming the new big landowners, as happened with the so-called "land reform" of the Velasco regime in the 1970s.

The People's War that is being carried out today by the workers, peasants, and their allies in Peru is a powerful response and the only way out of this crisis. Only nationwide political power for the vast majority, for the oppressed, will enable Peru to totally refuse to pay the \$23 billion foreign debt. Only then will it be in a position to confiscate the wealth of the big capitalists and big landlords, to break out of the imperialist stranglehold and build an economy that serves people, not profits.

Mariátegui's analysis of the basis for a peasant-based war of liberation was parallel to the strategy developed by Mao Tsetung in the New Democratic Revolution in China. A revolution whose main force is an aroused peasantry, led and organized by the proletariat, by a communist party.

Revolutionary Base Areas

The poor peasants in Peru today, the main fighting force of the revolution, are inspired by a vision of a future socialist society. In the countryside, the People's Liberation Army not only fights but participates in the organization and daily functioning of the base areas.

In the countryside, the mountain of semi-feudalism weighs most heavily on the people -- where the feudal tyrants, the army, and the



Peasant Fighters in a PCP Base Area

paramilitary forces led by the army, are the old enforcers, where the indigenous peasants are without land. Where the daily rape and abuse of peasant women is practiced in its crudest forms. Taking on these conditions and replacing them with new communities organized into revolutionary base areas is what the PCP calls "the essence of People's War."

Here is how the revolutionary base areas are organized:

The People's Committee, which is elected by the people of the base area, divides up the land that has been taken from the big landlords and the government, first to those who have none, then to those who have some land already. And the land is given to the family as a whole, with women having equal say.

Instead of each family working individually...**COLLECTIVE PLANTING AND HARVESTING** is promoted and the People's Liberation Army participates in the labor. They raise farm animals collectively and carry out seed exchanges for the whole base area.

A NEW JUSTICE is organized. Beating or other abuses of women are severely punished. People's Trials are organized where mass meetings of the community vote to decide the guilt or innocence of someone accused of a crime and to decide penalties. Divorce is granted on demand of either the man or the woman. Children and women are no longer allowed to be considered the property of their fathers and husbands. If a young woman wants to leave the family, like to go and join the People's Army, but her husband or father disagree, her right to decide for herself is defended.

RELIGION IS NEITHER PROMOTED OR RESTRICTED. Full freedom of religion is recognized. Not just the right to believe, but also the right NOT to believe, while representatives of the Church hierarchy who've been part of the government's brutal counterinsurgency are exposed and forced to leave or face punishment.

EDUCATION IS IN QUECHUA, which is the main language of the peasants. It includes history, natural sciences, math, and Spanish.

This is the new kind of social organization that is emerging in the base areas of the countryside. This is the new power that is being established through the People's War. This new power at the same time arises from and serves the armed struggle -- it provides sustenance for the People's Army, it provides intelligence and reconnaissance against the government troops, it provides a place for the People's Army to rest and prepare their actions, and brings more masses into the battle against the old society.

And in the new communities that are base areas of the revolution the people are developing a new culture, new art, a new justice, new relations among the people, and a new economy. Most importantly, in all this, the masses are learning to carry out the functions of the new state, nurturing what they call "the embryo of the new People's Republic."

These revolutionary base areas also reflect the united front of the revolutionary classes that the Communist Party of Peru is leading. They are run by popularly elected PEOPLE'S COMMITTEES. Each People's Committee is elected by what they call a Delegate Assembly, composed 1/3 of Party people (representing the proletariat -- the leading class in the revolution), 1/3 of poor peasants (the class that is the main force of the revolution), and 1/3 of middle peasants and other middle class people.

The heart of their united front of revolutionary classes is the worker-peasant alliance. Their People's Army is led by the Party and not the other way around, because as Mao said: "The Party must command the gun; the gun must never be allowed to command the Party." The firm alliance of the workers and peasants led by the Party -- AND their fighting capacity, their self-sacrifice, their discipline, and their vision -- has inspired many allies from the middle classes: teachers, doctors, journalists, and intellectuals. Revolutionary and democratic lawyers have defended the revolutionary fighters against the corrupt and cruel government.

Those who have gone to Peru with international delegations to defend the life of Chairman Gonzalo have witnessed firsthand the courage of democratic lawyers like Alfredo Crespo and Jorge Cartagena—people's lawyers who have persisted in their defense of imprisoned revolutionaries despite being tortured, killed or imprisoned themselves.

The Strategy of Protracted People's War

The People's War has proceeded through stages, beginning in Ayacucho, Huancavelica, Apurimac, sinking deep roots, expanding through the mountain regions and into the jungle.

Here in the vast areas of the countryside that have been largely abandoned by imperialist development also exist the conditions for developing the revolutionary war in a way that takes into account the weaknesses of the enemy and can rely on the strengths of the masses.

The lack of roads makes the deployment of enemy troops difficult. The government is forced to rely on fortified army bases like Santa Lucia in the Upper Huallaga and Mazamari in the Satipo River Valley. From these positions, the government can launch genocidal assaults on the people, but it has to rely on constant reinforcements from the cities. The desertion rate of the government's troops has been as high as 40 percent in some areas. The government has had to rely more and more on forcing local peasants into paramilitary groups called rondas. These rondas are led by local tyrants hated by the masses. The practice has only inspired more rage against the government.

The revolutionary forces, on the other hand, do not have to rely on reinforcements and supplies from the major cities. Their supplies and forces come from the masses they are organizing in the revolutionary base areas. The government has resorted to forcibly relocating peasants into areas near their military bases -- a counterinsurgency tactic called "strategic hamletting" that the U.S. used extensively in Vietnam.

At the same time, the Communist Party of Peru has organized actions in cities, particularly Lima -- actions that have shaken and stunned the imperialists, actions that have helped prepare the masses in the cities for the eventual seizure of power right in the bastion of the enemy's power.

They understand the need for the war to be a prolonged one through which they gradually accumulate strength by bringing broader and broader sections of the masses into struggle against the old state. They understand the importance of re-establishing base areas in places where the government has destroyed them.

This is a protracted process. Victory can not come quickly. Their party and the masses have shown that they are ready and able to pay the price of great sacrifice and years of war against the enemy in order to liberate themselves. But they are confident that victory can be won through a protracted war -- a protracted war that wears down the enemy while they expand and develop their revolutionary base areas, surrounding the cities from the countryside.

Mao Tsetung, in leading the 27-year-long war of liberation in China, had to repeatedly struggle against those who put forward what he called the "theory of national subjugation" -- those who argued that it was impossible to defeat the Japanese imperialists because they were strong

militarily and had superior weapons. Basing themselves on Mao, the Communist Party of Peru affirms that in warfare, *people*, not weapons, are decisive. In their 1982 pamphlet, *Guerrilla Warfare*, they say:

"We can never forget that an armed force...strategically, is only as strong as the social order it defends, no matter how heavily armed it may be tactically."

Mao also struggled against the line of a "quick victory" against imperialism and their lackeys in China.

"Not that we would not like a quick victory," wrote Mao. "Everybody would be in favor of driving the 'devils' out overnight. But we point out that in the absence of definite conditions, quick victory is some thing that exists only in one's mind and not in objective reality, and that it is a mere illusion, a false theory. Accordingly, having made an objective and comprehensive appraisal of all the circumstances concerning both the enemy and ourselves, we point out that the only way to final victory is the strategy of protracted war, and we reject the groundless theory of quick victory. We maintain that we must strive to secure all the conditions indispensable to final victory, and the more fully and the earlier these conditions are secured, the surer we shall be of victory and the earlier we shall win it."

The PCP set out on this course with an understanding that by starting the armed struggle they were crossing a great divide, going over into warfare which they would not pull back from until they destroyed the other side. They have spread from a few provinces to almost every corner of the country. The People's Liberation Army carries out mainly guerrilla actions against the armed forces, leads the masses to attack and liberate the so-called "strategic hamlets" of the government, carries out selective annihilations of proven enemies of the people who have a blood debt, and carries out sabotage of the economic foundations of the old state. They've proceeded through developing new plans and setting new objectives based on their advances.

The actions in the cities have included massive armed strikes that have paralyzed commerce and industry for days at a time -- preparing the masses in the cities for insurrection, basing themselves mainly in the vast shantytowns of urban poor that surround the city centers.

U.S. Intervention and the Capture of Chairman Gonzalo

In 1991 the advances in the People's War profoundly shook the Peruvian government and the US imperialists. U.S. experts in counterinsurgency began to warn that the PCP was on the verge of winning. Special hearings were held in the U.S. Congress to prepare for more direct U.S. intervention. The U.S. had already been stepping up its presence in Peru. Under the cover of the war on drugs, they had been sending military advisers and aid. The PCP put forward the slogan "Yankee Go Home" and began preparing themselves for direct imperialist intervention, determined to weather a massive attack and unleash a broader base of resistance against the invaders.

The U.S.-backed Fujimori government finally resorted to a military self-coup in April 1992. Fujimori seized dictatorial powers to try to crush the People's War, with the full backing of the U.S. He shut down Congress, abolished the constitution, and revamped the courts to enforce military rule over society. He massacred over 40 prisoners at Canto Grande Prison. The U.S. provided millions of dollars from the Department of Justice to finance secret panels of Peruvian military judges to try supporters of the revolution -- the infamous hooded judges, in the style of the Spanish Inquisition.

The capture of Chairman Gonzalo had U.S. intelligence written all over it. They thought they could crush the People's War by cutting off its head, but Chairman Gonzalo was defiant. On September 24, 1992 he gave a historic and inspiring speech from the cage in which the Fujimori regime had presented him to the world media. He declared that his capture was only a bend in the road in the revolutionary struggle and that the People's War must continue to victory in the interests of the masses in Peru and in the service of the world proletarian revolution.

Despite this bend in the road, the revolution continued. The government has unleashed a reign of terror -- locking up lawyers, raking shantytowns, mass arrests, and, in what Fujimori called his "Little Vietnam," the use of helicopters to launch rockets on base areas of the revolution.

Two-Line Struggle in the PCP and the Position of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement

In the face of these intense attacks, a call was issued for negotiations to reach a peace accord to put an end to 13 years of People's War, which the Fujimori regime attributed to Chairman Gonzalo.

The Central Committee of the PCP rejected this path of negotiation and has continued to lead the armed struggle. They recognized that difficulties and setbacks should never be confused with defeat.

What is the strength they have to draw on?

Mao Tsetung said that in a New Democratic Revolution the strength of the people is measured by their People's Army, their ability to fight the enemy, and the new power they have built in the revolutionary base areas.

Today, another strength that the People's War in Peru has to draw on is the RIM, the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement, the worldwide movement of Maoist parties and organizations. In a recently issued statement on the wrong line that called for negotiations, the Committee of the RIM put forward that:

"Marxism-Leninism-Maoism had to be applied to the questions involved in the struggle. This included a study of the history of negotiations in the international communist movement -- both positive and negative examples -- as well as a study of ways other than negotiations through which the communist movement has responded to important twists and turns in the revolutionary struggle. It has been necessary to deeply study and apply the basic Marxist-Leninist-Maoist principles of People's War. On this basis, the Committee of RIM (CoRIM) established the two basic criteria for evaluating the call for a peace accord:

"Do the proposed negotiations serve the task of seizing political power through revolutionary warfare, regardless of what stages or turns this warfare may go through, or are they aimed at returning to the pre-war situation of 1980 -- a protracted period in which no revolutionary armed struggle existed?

"While certain compromises may prove to be necessary, do the proposed negotiations safeguard the 'fundamental interests of that people' referred to by Mao, that is, the essential core of people's power and the revolutionary armed forces?

"With these two criteria in mind a many-sided investigation was undertaken. And after going as thoroughly as possible into a number of questions the Committee of the RIM concluded the following, that:

"Objectively and irrespective of the intentions of those who are arguing for it, the call for negotiations to reach a peace accord and the arguments, or rationalizations, put forward in defense and

elaboration of this call do not represent a necessary and justified compromise but rather a compromise of the fundamental interests of the people and an abandonment of the People's War and the revolutionary road."

The position of the Committee of the RIM recognizes that a threshold has been crossed in Peru which cannot be retreated from -- that the masses have been unleashed to fight for their liberation, that they have tasted partial victories and what it means to wield a new political power, that the enemy understands this too -- and that the enemy will not come to an agreement that would allow the revolutionary masses to live in peace.

If the war were ended the government would never allow the people to peacefully prepare to fight them again. The enemy would want to teach them a lesson: to never ever dare rise up again.

The CoRIM statement says:

"In a fundamental sense, revolutionary warfare led by the proletariat, once embarked upon, must continue until one of the two opposing sides has been defeated. It cannot be turned on and off at will as a mere pressure tactic to achieve concessions from the reactionary state. The means and goals of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist forces are fundamentally different than those of the warfare of other classes, for even when such warfare is opposed to the reactionary state, it does not and cannot aim for the very destruction of that reactionary state and the establishment of the rule of the masses."

In other words, the imperialists will never go lightly on a revolution that is led by the proletariat and its communist vanguard. Once the masses have embarked on this road of thoroughly tearing down the three mountains that their system rests on, the oppressors, if given a chance, will stop at nothing until they have drowned the revolution in blood. This is very different from the Sandinistas, for example, who are now being allowed to play a role in the imperialist setup in Nicaragua even though they have given up power. The imperialists could never accept peace with the Communist Party of Peru.

The CoRIM statement further explains that:

"The twists and turns of the revolutionary struggle, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the opposing camps, changes in the objective situation and so forth sometimes make it necessary for Communists to make substantial adjustments in their strategy and tactics, including retreats as well as advances. In some cases these

necessary adjustments have taken military expression -- such as the Long March led by Mao in the course of the Chinese Revolution. At other times, communists do not reject negotiations or even reaching possible agreements with reactionary ruling classes as tactics which may be possible and necessary as a result of concrete developments in the revolutionary struggle and in the context of a correct revolutionary strategy and perspective.

"However, in the actual circumstances and given the relation of class forces at this stage in Peru, there is, from the standpoint of the proletariat, no need for and no correct basis for negotiations leading to the end of the People's War. There is no basis -- in terms of the freedom and necessity of the revolutionary camp on the one hand and the reactionary camp on the other -- for achieving a peace accord that would not represent abandoning the revolutionary road and compromising away the fundamental interests of the people. Under these circumstances the only kind of peace accord which would be accepted by the Fujimori regime -- and more generally by the ruling classes in Peru and their imperialist masters -- is an agreement to end the war on a basis that could not benefit but would harm the revolutionary process in Peru. Therefore a proposal for peace accords to end the war could only lead to opportunism and must be combated."

Mao Tsetung said, "Without a revolutionary army, the people have nothing." The CoRIM summed up that to retreat from that principle, to give up the People's Army, can only result in the most serious defeat for the masses, a defeat that would deeply demoralize the masses and consign them to go back to the rule of the landlords and local tyrants. And it would in no way enable them to prepare conditions to someday fight again.

If the revolution gives up its army, the government will stop at nothing to crush the people, to exact revenge, to make life for the people a living hell.

The statement of the Committee of the RIM also points out that:

"Chairman Gonzalo remains in extreme conditions of confinement at the hands of the reactionary regime, denied contact with lawyers, kept in isolation, refused the visits of five distinguished international delegations and placed upon what the regime boasts is an 'information diet.' The Fujimori regime is notorious for its murder, lies, manipulations and physical and psychological abuse of prisoners of war. Under these circumstances one cannot accept indirect and unverifiable communications attributed to Chairman Gonzalo as representative of his thinking, and the fight must continue for an end to his isolation.

"It is clear that the negotiations line runs contrary to the basic line of the PCP which has led the People's War forward and which was forged under the leadership of Chairman Gonzalo. It is important to continue to try to determine Chairman Gonzalo's current views. The key question, however, is the line, not its author."

The international emergency campaign to defend the life of Abimael Guzmán (Chairman Gonzalo), which our Committee to Support the Revolution in Peru participates in, is determined to prevent the Fujimori regime from killing Comrade Gonzalo and we will step up our fight to end his isolation.

Building a Powerful Movement to Support the People's War in Peru

Brothers and sisters:

The struggle led by PCP is a just struggle. It is a beacon for oppressed people worldwide.

From the beginning of the revolution, the PCP has raised the slogan: "Without state power all is illusion." They've based themselves on the basic truth that, as Mao Tsetung said:

"The central task and highest form of revolution is the seizure of power by means of armed struggle, that is, the settlement of the issue through war." And that this war must be a war of the masses, a People's War.

Chairman Gonzalo spoke in his 1986 interview about how the most difficult test they had to face up to then was the government's genocide of 1983 and '84 -- and how they fought through those great difficulties and came out strengthened. Now the enemy is again throwing everything they have at the People's War at the same time that the Communist Party of Peru is fighting to defeat a wrong political line that emerged within their ranks. We are confident that the Central Committee of the PCP will victoriously navigate through this storm as well.

We here in the U.S., the imperialist power most responsible for the misery and suffering of the Peruvian people, have a special responsibility to fight to defend them and their cause. A more powerful movement must be built in the U.S. to stand with and support their struggle at this critical time -- to expose and draw forward broad forces to help expose and oppose the Fujimori government and its U.S. masters. We need all those who hate oppression to build this solidarity movement in the U.S.

VICTORY TO THE PEOPLE'S WAR IN PERU!

**DEFEND THE LIFE OF CHAIRMAN GONZALO, FIGHT
TO BREAK HIS ISOLATION!**

U.S. OUT OF PERU! - YANKEE GO HOME!
